



## Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council

A Council of the Business Industry Foundation of Middlesex County  
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March 11, 2011

To the Honorable Senator Eric Coleman & Representative Gerald Fox, Co-chairs;  
Honorable Senator Paul Doyle & Representative Holder-Winfield, Co Vice-Chairs;  
Honorable Senator John Kissel and Representative John Hetherington, Ranking Members:

On behalf of the board of the Middlesex Substance Abuse Action Council we ask for your **strong support of the following bill now before the Judiciary Committee.**

SB No. 1098. An Act Regulating the Sale and Possession of Synthetic Marijuana and Salvia Divinorum, will designate five synthetic cannabinoids and the herb salvia divinorum, and its active constituent salvinorum A, as controlled substances.

At this writing, the above products can be purchased as K-2, Spice, and "Ecstasy" [sic] for as little as \$10 in shops around Middlesex County, including some gas stations and convenience stores. Adults and children alike may buy them. As reported in the Hartford Courant, "extreme anxiety, racing heart and paranoia are among the symptoms patients have complained of after smoking synthetic marijuana." Young people are seeking help at emergency departments, and the Connecticut Poison Control Center has received several dozen calls for help.

Both physicians and court personnel (e.g., probation officers) are frustrated with the ease with which patients/clients can circumvent sober-living rules by taking these drugs, as they do not show up in standard drug testing. One local physician recently told us of a car accident that one of his patients caused while high on salvia.

In our experience, virtually all youth and too many adults believe that when a product is sold legally in stores, it is safe to use -- and poses fewer hazards than "real drugs." Nothing could be further from the truth. *Please take these dangerous products off the shelves of Connecticut stores!*

MCSAAC has worked for twenty years to improve the health of Middlesex County families. Legislation for the responsible use of alcohol and drugs remains our priority. Thank you for your assistance in passing the above legislation.

*Betsey S. Chadwick*  
Director, MCSAAC

*Anthony J. Salvatore*  
President, MCSAAC  
Chief of Police, Cromwell, CT